

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

NOTICE: 01-GRC-01

National Environmental Policy Act; Decommissioning of the Plum Brook Reactor Facility

AGENCY: National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Glenn Research Center (GRC), Cleveland, Ohio

ACTION: Finding of no significant impact (FONSI)

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and NASA Procedures for Implementing NEPA (14 CFR Subpart 1216.3), NASA has independently reviewed the Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for the proposed decontamination and decommissioning of the Plum Brook Reactor Facility (PBRF), located at GRC Plum Brook Station, in Sandusky, Ohio, and has determined that it represents an accurate analysis of the scope and level of associated environmental impacts. Based upon the analyses and evaluations developed in the EA, NASA has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and has concluded that an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary with respect to the proposed decontamination and decommissioning of PBRF. The EA is incorporated by reference in this FONSI.

DATE: Comments in response to this notice must be received in writing no later than **(30 days after publication)**.

ADDRESS: Comments should be addressed to Mr. Michael J. Blotzer, Chief, Environmental Management Office, NASA Glenn Research Center, Mail Stop 6-4, 21000 Brookpark Road, Cleveland, OH 44135; telephone (216) 433-8159, E-mail Michael.Blotzer@grc.nasa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Michael J. Blotzer, Chief, Environmental Management Office, NASA Glenn Research Center (above).

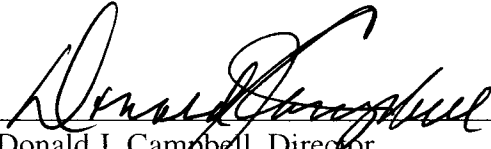
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Glenn Research Center (GRC) currently has a U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) license to "possess but do not operate" the Plum Brook Reactor Facility (PBRF) at the GRC Plum Brook Station. NASA GRC has no further need for the PBRF to support the NASA mission and is proposing to decontaminate the facility, dispose of contaminated waste in a licensed, permitted disposal facility, and terminate the NRC license. The decision to go forward with decommissioning is effective immediately.

Three alternatives were considered: the Proposed Action, which is prompt decontamination and license termination; Alternative 1, which is the no action alternative as required by the NEPA; and Alternative 2, which is entombing the PBRF in concrete to allow radioactive decay and subsequently decontaminating and decommissioning the facility. The Proposed Action is to

promptly decontaminate and decommission the PBRF to meet NRC's unrestricted use criteria. Even though the facility and residual contamination would be removed to allow unrestricted use, NASA would retain the PBRF property as part of the Plum Brook Station.

Environmental impacts from implementing the Proposed Action were evaluated and no significant impacts were identified. Impacts on Plum Brook Station would occur primarily in the work area within the PBRF area with some impact occurring along site roads. Since this area was previously disturbed to construct the reactor facility and protective measures would be taken during decontamination, there would be no significant environmental impact. The Proposed Action would have minimal incremental impact to the environment and population offsite of the Plum Brook Station. The impacts would occur because of: (1) controlled discharges to the air and water during reactor decontamination and dismantlement as well as site regrading and (2) increases in local offsite traffic from an increased site workforce. However, these impacts would not be intensive, would be highly localized, and would be transient in nature. Actions would be taken to mitigate these impacts.

GRC considered cumulative impacts to the environment, principally the air quality and traffic, from implementing the Proposed Action in the context of other reasonably foreseeable actions, both Federal and non-Federal, in the vicinity of the PBRF. These other actions include (1) Ohio Department of Transportation (DOT) widening of Route 250, which borders the eastern boundary of Plum Brook Station, (2) NASA relocating certain facilities currently located at GRC in Cleveland, Ohio to the Plum Brook Station, and (3) a developer constructing a housing development along Taylor Road near the entrance to Plum Brook Station. GRC determined that cumulative impacts on Plum Brook Station itself would be minimal. GRC also determined that the added effect of the Proposed Action on air quality and traffic in the local area would not be significant and that the impacts of the Ohio DOT Route 250 widening project have been addressed in a respective Ohio Department of Transportation Categorical Exclusion.


Donald J. Campbell, Director
Glenn Research Center

March 16, 2001
Date